Gas Based Petrochemicals and Gas Cracker Projects in Assam

559. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government of Assam submitted very viable schemes to the Central Government for gas based petrochemicals and gas cracker projects to be set up soon in Assam for giving fillip to a large number of small industries; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government is this regard and by when the schemes are likely to be implemented?

MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI VENGAL RAO): (a) and (b) There is a proposal for the setting up of a petrochemical complex in Assam. Decision on such proposals are taken based on techno-economic considerations.

Closing down of Industrial Gas Units

560. SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the Industrial Gas Units in the country are closing down on the pretext of over production as reported in the Financial Express dated the 29th January, 1989;

(b) if so, whether this is due to over-licensing of capacity or over production or poor off-take due to high prices; and

(c) whether Government have any plans to introduce production norms for such Units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) No specific instance of Closure of Units manufacturing industrial gases has been reported.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Amending the Indian Patent Act, 1970

561. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under Government's consideration to amend the Indian Patent Act, 1970; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

562. *[Transferred to the 2nd March, 1989]*

563. *[Transferred to the 3rd March, 1989]*

564. *[Transferred to the 7th March, 1989]*

Industrial Policy to open the Industry to Foreign Competition

565. SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the industrial policy is proposed to be further liberalised to open the industry to foreign competition; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) The basic objectives of the liberalisation measures are to accelerate industrial growth on the one hand and to enhance the efficiency and competitiveness of our industry on the other. These measures have started yielding positive results. Modernisation and technology upgradation, cost reduction, quality improvement and consumer satisfaction are receiving increasing attention on the part of the industry under competitive pressures. Liberalisation of industrial policy and procedures for promoting these objectives

is a continuous process and specific measures are taken according to the changing needs and circumstances.

Manufacturing of Gas Cylinders by Public Sector and Private Sector Companies

566. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MA[illegible] the Minister of INDUS[illegible] pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Gas Cylinders are being manufactured by a number [illegible] Private Sector Companies [illegible]y, and

(b) if so, what is the name of each company [illegible]mber of gas cylinders manufact[illegible] each private Sector and Public Sector Company during the last four years?

[illegible] STATE IN THE [illegible]STRIAL DE[illegible] THE MINISTRY OF [illegible] (SHRI M. [illegible]LAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Statement is attached. [*See* Appendix CXLIX Annexure No. 24]

Oil Reserves in the Country

567. S[illegible] I RENUKA CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the oil reserves in the country will according to a survey conducted recently, exhaust in the [illegible] if the present rate of drilling is maintained;

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking in this regard; and

(c) if not, for how many years the present oil reserves will last?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (c) The balance recoverable crude oil reserve as on January 1, 1988 was about 640 million tonnes as against about 500 million tonnes on January 1, 1985. The reserves undergo continuous changes depending upon new accretions and depletions. Continuous exploration efforts are made to discover new reserves. There is no question of exhaustion of the oil reserves within a particular time frame so long the rate of accretions to reserves is higher than the rate of depletion of reserves.

Action Against LPG Dealers for late Supply of LPG Cylinders

568. SHRI ANAND PRAKASH GAUTAM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an active shortage of LPG cylinders in the capital particularly in Gole Market area during the months of January and February, 1989; if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the consumers have yet to face great hardship as the distributors are supplying the LPG cylinders only after two to three weeks period;

(c) if so, what action Government propose to take against the distributors who are not supplying the cylinders to the consumers according to priority dates as entered in their registers;

(d) whether it is also a fact that the Indian Oil Corporation authorities have not taken adequate steps at appropriate time to tackle the situation while they were aware of the fact that the workers at bottling plants were going on strike; and

(e) if so, what action Government propose to take against the officials responsible for not taking action in time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (e) A backlog in supply of LPG refills had developed recently in the Union Territory of Delhi, includings Gole Market area, on account of transporter's and industrial relations problems, leading